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GOOD AFTERNOON AND WELCOME TO THIS BEAUTIFUL CHAMBER I HAVE HAD THE HONOR AND PRIVILEGE TO CALL HOME FOR THE PAST 20 YEARS.

AS I LOOK OUT AND SEE THE PAINTING OF MY LATE HUSBAND, FORMER MAYOR AND COUNCIL PRESIDENT RALPH VILLANI AND I REALIZE THAT THE NAME VILLANI HAS BEEN IN PUBLIC SERVICE FOR OVER 43 YEARS.

MY SON ALLEN SAYS THAT WHEN MY HUSBAND PASSED AWAY IN 1973 I RE-MARRIED THE CITY OF NEWARK. NO STATEMENT COULD BE MORE TRUE.

IT IS WITH MIXED EMOTIONS TODAY THAT I ANNOUNCE MY RESIGNATION FROM THE NEWARK MUNICIPAL COUNCIL TO TAKE EFFECT WITHIN THE 60 TO 90 DAYS.

I HAVE FOUGHT MANY TOUGH BATTLES IN THIS CITY, HOWEVER, MY DOCTORS HAVE ADVISED ME THAT THIS BATTLE OF MY HEALTH I CANNOT WIN. IT HAS TAKEN ME THREE MONTHS TO COME TO TERMS WITH THIS, BUT MY ARM WAS FINALLY TWISTED ONE LAST TIME BY MY GOD AND FOUR LITTLE PEOPLE JAMIAN, JULIANA, LITTLE ROBS AND LITTLE GABRIELLA, THEY ARE MY GRANDCHILDREN.




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TO THE RESIDENTS OF NEWARK I KNOW I CAN LEAVE HERE TODAY AND SAY MARIE, YOU LITERALLY GAVE YOUR HEART TO THE CITY, YOU HAVE NOTHING LEFT TO GIVE. MY RESPONSIBILITY NOW IS TO MYSELF AND TO MY GRANDCHILDREN. TO THE OFFICE I HAVE LOVED SO MUCH, TO MY WONDERFUL STAFF AND TO THE EIGHT MEN I HAVE SERVED WITH, TODAY I SAY TO THEM, WE HAVE HAD OUR DIFFERENCES, BUT I LOVE EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU.

AS I HAVE SAID, THIS RESIGNATION WILL TAKE EFFECT WITHIN THE NEXT 60 TO 90 DAYS. DURING THIS PERIOD MY STAFF, AS OVERWORKED AS THEY ARE NOW - THEY ARE LITERALLY OUT IN THE COMMUNITY EVERYDAY COVERING FOR ME AND WILL CONTINUE TO FUNCTION ON THE BEHALF OF THE PUBLIC.

I WILL WORK ON A VERY LIMITED BASIS FROM MY HOME, I CANNOT PHYSICALLY DISASSEMBLE AN OFFICE THAT TOOK TWENTY YEARS TO BUILD ON A MOMENTS NOTICE.


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I WILL ALSO BE HELPING MY STAFF GETTING PLACED IN OTHER POSITIONS. THIS WILL ALSO REMOVE THE COSTLY TAXPAYER BURDEN OF A SPECIAL ELECTION. AN ELECTION THAT I FEEL WOULD SERVE NO PURPOSE FOR THE GOOD OF ANYONE WITH THE NEXT MUNICIPAL ELECTION SO CLOSE.

ALTHOUGH I HAVE BEEN THE FIRST WOMAN TO BE ELECTED TO SERVE ON THE NEWARK MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, I AM SURE THAT I WON'T BE THE LAST. I WOULD LIKE VERY MUCH FOR TO SEE AT LEAST ONE WOMAN ELECTED IN THE 1994 ELECTIONS, AND PERHAPS MORE THAN ONE.

MY ONLY REGRET IS THAT MY ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT FOR THE PAST 18 YEARS SHARON BRADMAN NO LONGER LIVES IN NEWARK OR SHE WOULD BE MY CHOICE. SHARON IS MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE IN GETTING THINGS DONE THAN ANY POTENTIAL CANDIDATE, MALE OR FEMALE.


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AS FAR AS AN INTERIM APPOINTMENT IS CONCERNED , OF COURSE THAT WOULD BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF OF MY COLLEAGUES. IN THE PAST, OTHER THAN THE SELECTION OF A FAMILY MEMBER REPLACEMENT, SUCH AS MYSELF WHEN MY HUSBAND WAS UNABEL TO CONTINUE OR GARY HARRIS UPON THE UNTIMELY PASSING OF HIS FATHER, EARL HARRIS, WHO WE ALL LOVED AND RESPECTED. TRADITION HAS PROJECTED THE INDIVIDUAL WHO CAME CLOSET IN THE LAST MUNICIPAL ELECTION, AND THAT WOULD BE DEPUTY MAYOR LUIS QUINTANA. ALTHOUGH THAT WAS A HOTLY-CONTESTED ELECTION, PERHAPS THE INTERESTS OF FAIRNESS WOULD REQUIRE THIS.

BESIDES NOW HAVING QUALITY TIME TO ENJOY MY GRANDCHILDREN I ALSO HAVE BEGUN TO GATHER MY MEMORIES OF OVER 20 YEARS AS THE ONLY WOMAN SETTING ON THE NEWARK MUNICIPAL COUNCIL.

MEMORIES THAT I HOPE TO PUT INTO BOOK FORM - A BOOK NOT TO HURT BUT TO TELL A TRUE STORY OF THE TRANSITION OF THE CITY OF NEWARK AND OF MY ROLE IN THIS TRANSITION.



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IN CLOSING, I'VE BEEN ASKED WHAT WILL I MISS MOST BY NOT BEING A MEMBER OF THE NEWARK MUNICIPAL COUNCIL? MY FEELINGS ARE THE SAME AS MAGIC JOHNSON, WHEN HE WAS ASKED THE SAME QUESTION AND HE REPLIED NOT BEING ONE OF THE BOYS".